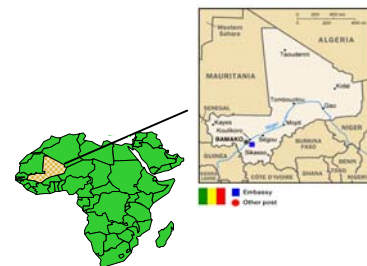




DoD HIV/AIDS Prevention Program Status Report:

Mali



BACKGROUND

Introduction/General Information

The Malian population is estimated to be just over 11 million people, and in-country life expectancy estimates range from 47 to 51 years. French is the official language in Mali, with an estimated literacy rate of 31%. Literacy is disproportionately distributed between males and females. Mali's economy is described as underdeveloped, with 80% of the population engaging in substance agriculture. Annual per capita income estimates range from \$240 to \$840.

Country HIV/AIDS Statistics and Risk Factors

Mali is believed to have one of the lowest HIV/AIDS prevalence rates in sub-Saharan Africa, estimated to be approximately 1.7% of the adult population with either HIV infection or AIDS. The number of people estimated to be living with HIV ranges from 110,000 to 140,000. Identified significant risk factors include a high incidence of sexually transmitted infections (STIs), and high-risk heterosexual contact with both multiple partners and commercial sex workers.

Military HIV/AIDS Information

The size of the military in Mali is estimated at approximately 20,000. The Malian military has not performed systematic

screening of personnel, and prevalence statistics are therefore unavailable. Current force-wide rates are believed to be similar to those found in the civilian population.

PROPOSED PROGRAM

To date, no HIV/AIDS prevention plan has been submitted by Mali.

PROGRAM RESPONSE

Military-to-Military

The West African Health Organization (WAHO) submitted a plan for a large-scale conference on the coordination of West African military efforts in HIV prevention. DHAPP staff, in turn, transferred funds to Tulane University, New Orleans, Louisiana, which has a cooperative agreement with WAHO to facilitate Mali's participation.

Contractor-Based Assistance

In addition to the funding described above, Mali is the recipient of aid from an external contractor funded by DHAPP. In 2002, Population Services International (PSI) was awarded a contract to develop and implement an HIV/AIDS prevention program with the Malian military.

PSI's behavioral intervention program will provide 200 peer educators trained to be active agents of community change, with 20

peer education managers to provide supervision. Peer educators will provide several small group sessions each month, and will advocate voluntary counseling and testing (VCT) and STI screening for their peers. Other goals include increasing knowledge of HIV/AIDS among military members, increasing risk perception, and improving condom use knowledge. Finally, Malian military medical personnel will be trained by PSI to provide on-site HIV testing and pretest and posttest counseling; confidentiality will be emphasized and maintained at all times.

PROGRAM IMPACT

Master Trainers and Peer Educators

To date, 14 peer educator managers have been chosen and trained from 3 of the 6 military regions. A total of 143 peer educators have been chosen from the same regions, and 20 of these individuals have received training thus far.



Peer educators from the Malian military received HIV/AIDS prevention training.



Graduates from the peer education supervisor training course on HIV/AIDS Prevention displayed their certificates.

Potential Number of Troops Affected

DHAPP sponsored HIV/AIDS prevention efforts can reach 20,000 troops.

Voluntary Counseling and Testing (VCT)

Three VCT centers will be launched by the end of July 2003. Sites for these centers include Bamako, Tomboctou, and Mopti. In addition, 129 military medical personnel have been trained in STI diagnosis and treatment, while 34 doctors and midwives received instruction in the care and support of HIV-positive patients.

Mass Awareness

A campaign slogan and logo have been chosen based on focus group discussions conducted with a sample of 773 Malian military personnel. An in-country advertising agency is making final adjustments and anticipates launching the mass awareness campaign in June 2003.